

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
108th Congress: 2003-2004

Republican Accomplishments:

***Meeting America's Increasing Needs For Improved
Infrastructure & Enhancing Our Nation's Anti-Terrorism
Security Programs***



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The challenge of the 108th Congress for the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee has been to continue to improve the ability of the transportation sector to prevent or respond to terrorist attacks while also focusing on our efforts to expand and improve our nation's essential infrastructure. America's economy rests on transportation infrastructure that assures our ability to move both passengers and freight in a safe, timely and cost-effective manner.

The nation faces a renewed crisis in the aviation sector with airlines continuing to feel the impact of terrorism both at home and abroad, and struggling to meet the rising fuel prices and other fixed costs. The Committee produced a landmark Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) authorization bill that became a public law which provided much-needed relief and authorizations for important aviation improvements, safety and anti-terrorism programs.

Our nation's expansive highway system continues to crumble and congestion worsens in every region. The Committee extended our highway, transit, and motor carriers programs until May 31, 2005, and we continue negotiating the largest and most comprehensive multi-year highway bill in our nation's history. While this historic legislation was not finalized as of October 2004, the House and Senate conferees continue a dialogue that will move the proposal toward final passage. H.R. 3550, TEA LU, moved through the House and included \$283 billion in funding for highways and transit programs as well as important high priority projects to be constructed or completed throughout every region of the country.

The Committee also passed the Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004 that became public law. This law will allow for the modernization of the Coast Guard's aircraft and vessels, in addition to increasing funding for its newly expanded role in homeland security. The comprehensive Water Resources Development Act legislation was another important achievement for the Committee.

In addition to the FAA reauthorization legislation, the Aviation Subcommittee continued its work to improve anti-terrorist security programs by approving legislation to address the potential problems of shoulder-fired missile attacks on aircrafts, biometric security measures, and allowing cargo pilots to have firearms in the cockpit of their jets to prevent terrorist hijackings. Maintaining and expanding our transportation system and developing new safety and anti-terrorism programs were the major accomplishments in the 108th Congress by the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

###

Aviation

Flight 100--Century of Aviation Reauthorization Act (H.R. 2115)

Became Public Law 108-176

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation reauthorizes the Federal Aviation Administration and related programs - including aviation safety and airport security programs - through the end of FY2006. It continues the procedural guarantees enacted in the Aviation Investment and Reform Act for the 21st century (AIR 21) that all taxes and revenues paid into the Aviation Trust Fund are fully spent and that airport improvements and air traffic control modernization are fully funded. Vision 100 includes numerous major programmatic reforms including: FAA management reform, expansion of the Small Community Air Service Program, reform of the Essential Air Service Program, and streamlining of the environment review process for urgent airport capacity projects.

###

Commercial Aviation MANPADS Defense Act of 2004 (H.R. 4056)

Passed the House of Representatives on July 22, 2004

House bill sponsored by Rep. John Mica (R-Florida)

This legislation would expand the current effort to protect commercial aircraft from terrorist attacks by shoulder-fired missiles. The "Commercial Aviation MANPADS Defense Act of 2004" (CAMDA), makes clear that while the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) is conducting research and development of missile defense equipment for commercial aircraft, other efforts to address the threat posed by MANPADS should be taken.

CAMDA takes a very comprehensive approach to addressing the threat of MANPADS. It encourages the President to pursue strong international diplomatic and cooperative efforts, including multilateral and bilateral treaties, to limit the availability, transfer and proliferation of MANPADS and to seek the destruction of excess, obsolete and illicit MANPADS. It also encourages the President to continue programs to reduce the number of MANPADS worldwide. H.R. 4056 requires the FAA, when appropriate, to expedite their airworthiness certification and to avoid duplicating the efforts taken by Department of Homeland Security (DHS) during the missile defense system research and

development efforts. Finally it requires the DHS to report to Congress, within one year, on the vulnerability assessment reports they are conducting at U.S. airports and any ground-based defense policies or procedures recommended through that process.

###

National Transportation Safety Board Reauthorization Act of 2003

(S. 579) (H.R. 1527)

Became Public Law 108-168

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation will help expedite important transportation safety recommendations and authorizes the programs of the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) through the year 2006. It addresses the problem of delays in implementing important NTSB recommendations by requiring an annual report from the Department of Transportation on the status of all significant safety recommendations it has received from the NTSB. The Act also requires the NTSB to notify aircraft owners and operators of their right to appeal a Board employee's decision classifying a particular event involving an aircraft as an accident. Finally, the Act allows the NTSB to turn over family assistance responsibilities to the Federal Bureau of Investigation if it is determined that a crash initially investigated by the NTSB was the result of a criminal act.

###

Cape Town Treaty Implementation Act of 2004

(H.R. 4226)

Became Public Law 108-297

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation will aid both the U.S. aviation industry and international commercial aviation businesses. It brings the uniformity of modern commercial finance laws, already in place in the United States, to international transactions involving aircraft and aircraft engines. In order to fully implement the Cape Town Treaty and its accompanying protocol, the Cape Town Treaty Implementation Act designates the Federal Aviation Administration's Civil Aviation Registry to be the U.S. "Entry Point" to the International Registry for relevant transactions. This is an important change in U.S. law because it will ensure that the Cape Town Treaty and its aircraft protocol can be fully implemented.

###

H.R. 10 - 9/11 Recommendations Implementation Act

(H.R. 10)

Became Public Law 108-458

House bill sponsored by Rep. J. Dennis Hastert (R- Illinois)

This legislation implements a number of recommendations set forth in the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (9/11 Commission) Report and incorporates Transportation and Infrastructure Committee aviation security improvement provisions including, the use of biometrics or other technology for airport access control; transportation security strategic planning; Next Generation Airline Passenger Pre-Screening Program; the expedited deployment and use of explosive detection equipment at airport screening checkpoints and in in-line baggage systems; the use of blast-resistant cargo and baggage containers; Federal Law Enforcement In-Flight Counterterrorism Training; Federal Flight Deck Officer Weapon Carriage Pilot Program; wireless communication for flight crews; secondary flights deck barriers; Federal Air Marshal Training; and addressing the threat of Man-Portable Air Defense Systems (MANPADS) to commercial aviation.

###

Omnibus Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2005

(H.R. 4818)

Became Public Law 108-447

House bill sponsored by Rep. Jim Kolbe (R-Arizona)

War Risk Insurance for Airlines: The House Appropriations Committee, at the request of Chairman Don Young, included language providing a one-year extension, through December 31, 2005, of domestic aviation war risk insurance. This program was expanded shortly after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, to provide terrorism insurance and a liability limitation for air carriers.

###

Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation

Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2004 (H.R. 2443)

Became Public Law 108-293
House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

The legislation authorizes \$8.2 billion for Coast Guard programs and operations in Fiscal Year 2005. The law also amends existing statutes to improve management of Coast Guard activities, navigation, and commercial shipping. The legislation makes a series of amendments to the Maritime Transportation Security Act of 2002 that require reports on the security and screening of maritime cargo containers, the degree of information sharing between Federal agencies regarding activities in the maritime domain, and the design of the Department of Homeland Security's port security grant program.

This law also includes many of the provisions included in House bills H.R. 3879 and H.R. 4251.

###

Coast Guard Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2005 (H.R. 3879)

Reported by the Committee on May 11, 2004
House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation authorized funding for Coast Guard activities for Fiscal Year 2005. The Committee approved a funding level of \$7.9 billion, including an amount of \$1.1 billion for the Integrated Deepwater System, the Coast Guard's multi-year, asset recapitalization program.

###

Maritime Transportation Amendments of 2004

(H.R. 4251)

Reported by the Committee on November 16, 2004

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation amended existing statutes to enhance the Coast Guard's authority to promote and protect maritime safety and to enforce port security regulations. The legislation also includes provisions to improve the safety and security of commercial shipping by requiring regular inspection of towing vessels and by requiring notification of drug test violations from civilian and certain uniformed personnel employed aboard Federally-operated vessels.

###

Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management

Economic Development Administration Reauthorization Act of 2003

(H.R. 2535)(S. 1134)(H.R. 2454)

Became Public Law 108-373

House bill sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

H.R. 2535 reauthorized the Economic Development Administration for an additional five years and authorizes \$2.25 billion over five years for program operations. The legislation also updates the findings and declarations; revises several definitions; and allows for the inclusion of non-profit entities in eligible economic development activities. This reauthorization also grants the Secretary of Commerce the authority to: implement a performance based incentive plan, issue new regulations relating to the operation of revolving loan funds, waive planning requirements for isolated areas, convene meetings to improve coordination between federal agencies, increase the federal share of grants, allow for increased retention of funds, and issue new performance regulations.

###

Predisaster Mitigation Program Reauthorization Act of 2003 (H.R. 3181)

Passed the House of Representatives on November 21, 2003

House bill sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

H.R. 3181, the Predisaster Mitigation Program Reauthorization Act of 2003 reauthorizes the Predisaster Mitigation Program (PDM) for three years; increases the percentage of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) funds to 15%; allows the President to offer additional home repair assistance to disaster victims; and requires the completion of a Congressional Budget Office (CBO) study in two years studying the cost-effectiveness of the program. The bill amends the Individuals and Housing Program (IHP) to authorize the President to give additional home repair assistance when the initial amount of \$5,000, the current cap, is insufficient. The legislation allows the President to offer additional assistance up to the overall IHP cap of \$25,000.

A one-year extension of PDM was included in H.R. 4818, the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2004.

###

John F. Kennedy Center Reauthorization Act of 2004

(H.R. 5294)(S. 1757)

Became Public Law 108-410

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R–Alaska)

This bill reauthorizes the capital program of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts for three years. It authorizes \$53 million for maintenance, repair and alteration and \$52 million for capital projects. In addition, the bill requires the General Accounting Office (GAO) to review the capital program of the Kennedy Center to ensure effective project management. A Project Team is established for improved project management of the Plaza Project. The Project Team includes the Secretary of Transportation, Administrator of General Services, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and other appropriate individuals. The Project Team is responsible for overseeing decisions relating to the Plaza Project that will affect the scope, cost, schedule, or engineering feasibility of the overall project.

###

Faster and Smarter Funding for First Responders Act of 2004

(H.R. 3266)(S. 930)(S. 1245)(H.R. 10)(S. 2845)

Passed the House of Representatives as a part of H.R. 10
on October 8, 2004

House bill sponsored by Rep. Christopher Cox (R–California)

The bill, as amended by the Subcommittee on Economic Development, Public Buildings and Emergency Management, adds a new title to the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. This new title provides for the revision of the manner in which the Department provides funding to first responders; clarifies the purpose of funding for first responders; defines key terms; establishes a National Preparedness Goal; requires the establishment of essential capabilities for first responders; requires the establishment of national standards for equipment and training; requires a statewide preparedness strategy; addresses what grants are covered by the legislation and provides for a state minimum award; clarifies how those funds may be used; provides accountability for the Department and grant recipients; restricts changes to certain existing programs; authorizes appropriations for the program; and requires reporting by the Department and grant recipients. The text of the legislation was included as a part of the passage of H.R. 10.

###

***Authorizing construction of the Very Energetic Radiation
Imaging Telescope Array System (VERITAS) project on Kitt
Peak near Tucson, Arizona***

(H.R. 5105)(Senate passed House version)

Became Public Law 108-331

House bill sponsored by Rep. Robert W. Ney (R-Ohio)

The VERITAS project is a collaborative effort that brings together the Smithsonian Institution and 10 universities from the United States, Canada, Ireland, and Great Britain to construct a new ground-based gamma-ray observatory with an array of four 12m optical reflectors for gamma-ray astronomy. The new gamma-ray observatory will allow scientists to explore new aspects of the universe by allowing them to observe interstellar energy patterns, which were previously inaccessible from ground based observatories. This legislation authorized \$1 million to assist in the construction of the support facilities, including a new building and site development.

###

***Directing the Administrator of General Services to convey to
Fresno County, California, the existing Federal courthouse in
that county***

(H.R. 1274)(S. 441)

Became Public Law 108-221

House bill sponsored by Rep. Calvin Dooley (D-California)

H.R. 1274, as amended, authorized the Administrator of General Services to convey to Fresno County, California the B.F. Sisk Federal Building and United States Courthouse located at 1130 O Street in Fresno, California. The General Services Administration is currently constructing a new courthouse in Fresno, California. The courthouse is not to be transferred until occupancy of the new courthouse.

###

***Adding Ashtabula, Mahoning, and Trumbull Counties, Ohio, to
the Appalachian region***

(H.R. 587)(H.R. 2535)(S. 1134)

Passed the House of Representatives as part of H.R. 2535 on October 21,
2003.

House bill sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

H.R. 587, as amended, adds 12 counties to the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC). The legislation adds Ashtabula, Fayette, Mahoning, and Trumbull Counties in the State of Ohio, Nicholas and Robertson Counties in the State of Kentucky, Giles, Lawrence, Lewis and Lincoln Counties in the State of Tennessee, and Henry and Patrick Counties in the Commonwealth of Virginia. Membership within the ARC makes counties eligible to receive assistance under its programs. All of these counties border on the existing ARC and are a natural extension of the ARC.

###

***Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the National
Peace Officers' Memorial Service***

(H. Con. Res. 96)(Senate passed House version on May 8, 2003)

Passed the House of Representatives on May 7, 2003

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

(H. Con. Res. 388)(Senate passed House version on May 12, 2004)

Passed the House of Representatives on April 28, 2004

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

Authorized use of the Capitol Grounds for the 22nd and 23rd Annual National Peace Officers' Memorial Service held on May 15, 2003 and 2004. The memorial service honored the federal, state, and local law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty in 2002 and 2003. The Grand Lodge of the Fraternal Order of Police and its Auxiliary were the sponsors of the event.

###

***Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for activities
associated with the dedication of the National World War II
Memorial***

(H. Con. Res. 423)

Passed the House of Representatives on May 17, 2004

Senate passed House version on May 21, 2004

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Marcy Kaptur (R-Ohio)

Authorized the use of the Capitol Grounds for activities associated with the dedication of the National World War II Memorial. Events were held on May 29, 2004.

###

***Establish within the Smithsonian Institution the National
Museum of African American History and Culture***

(H.R. 3491)(S. 1157)

Became Public Law 108-184

House bill sponsored by Rep. John Lewis (D-Georgia)

Establishes within the Smithsonian Institution the National Museum of African American History and Culture, to be operated as a center for scholarship and a location for museum training, public education, exhibits, and collection and study of items and materials relating to the life, art, history, and culture of African Americans that encompass the period of slavery, the era of reconstruction, the Harlem renaissance, the civil rights movement, and other periods of the African American diaspora.

###

***Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater
Washington Soap Box Derby***

(H. Con. Res. 53)(Senate passed House version on May 8, 2003)

Passed the House of Representatives on May 7, 2003

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

(H. Con. Res. 376)(Senate passed House version on April 29, 2004)

Passed the House of Representatives on April 28, 2004

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

Authorized the use of the Capitol Grounds for the Greater Washington Soap Box Derby qualifying races. The races took place on Constitution Avenue between Delaware Avenue and Third Street, NW. Winners of the event represented the Washington, DC metropolitan area in the national soapbox derby competition held in Akron, Ohio.

###

Authorizing the use of the Capitol Grounds for the District of Columbia Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run

(H. Con. Res. 128)(Senate passed House version on May 16, 2003)

Passed the House of Representatives on May 7, 2003

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

(H. Con. Res. 389)(Senate passed House version on May 12, 2004)

Passed the House of Representatives on May 11, 2004

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Steve LaTourette (R-Ohio)

Authorized the use of the Capitol Grounds for the 18th and 19th Annual Law Enforcement Torch Runs, benefiting the District of Columbia Special Olympics. The Capitol Police along with the DC Special Olympics participated in the torch run held on June 6, 2003 and June 4, 2004.

###

Designating room H-236 in the House of Representatives wing of the Capitol as the “Richard K. Armey Room”

(H. Res. 19)

Passed the House of Representatives on March 11, 2003

House resolution sponsored by Rep. Jim Nussle (R-Iowa)

H. Res. 19 designated room H-236 in the House of Representatives wing of the Capitol as the “Richard K. Armey Room.” In 1984, Congressman Armey was elected to the House of Representatives to serve in the 99th Congress. He was reelected to each succeeding Congress until his retirement after the 107th Congress. In 1992, Congressman Armey became Chairman of the House Republican Conference. In 1994, he became Majority Leader, a position he held until his retirement.

###

Twenty-two Bills recognizing the contributions of a number of former public servants through designation of federal buildings and courthouses across the country

Eleven bills became Public Laws: 108-14, 108-35, 108-37, 108-70, 108-80, 108-223, 108-225, 108-226, 108-227, 108-273, and 108-288.

Bills sponsored by a number of Members of Congress

The House of Representatives has passed 22 bills recognizing the contributions of a number of former public servants through the designation of federal buildings and courthouses across the country. Eleven of these bills have become public laws. Each of these dedicated public servants is deserving of this honor and each received overwhelming support by the Committee and the House of Representatives.

###

Reauthorization of the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program
(H.R. 4107)(S. 2411)

Passed the House of Representatives as a part of the conference report on
H.R. 4200, Department of Defense Authorization Act of 2004

October 8, 2004

Became Public Law 108-375

House bill sponsored by Rep. Sherwood Boehlert (R-NY)

Reauthorizes the program for an additional five years and authorizes \$5.85 billion for the program. Lowers the local match for large departments and small communities, increases the grant size for larger communities, expands eligible uses, allows grants to non-affiliated Emergency Medical Services teams, sets aside 3.5% for EMS purposes, and codifies the peer-review process.

###

Highways, Transit and Pipelines

Surface Transportation Extension Acts

Public Laws: 108-88, 108-202, 108-224, 108-263,
108-280 and 108-310

House bills sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), except Surface Transportation Extension Act, Part II by Rep. Thomas Petri (R-Wisconsin)

The purpose of these Acts is to extend Federal highway, highway safety, motor carrier safety and transit programs, and to authorize appropriations. The first extension was enacted on September 30, 2003 and the last on September 30, 2004. The latest bill extends funding through May 31, 2005, if necessary.

###

Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (H.R. 3550)(S. 1072)

Passed the House of Representatives on April 2, 2004

Appointed Conferees on June 3, 2004

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This important legislation reauthorizes the Federal highway, public transportation, highway safety and motor carrier safety programs for 6 years, from FY 2004 through FY 2009. TEA LU provides \$285 billion in new funding over the life of the bill. This is an increase of \$67 billion over the previous reauthorization, TEA-21.

Through increased investment in our nation's transportation infrastructure, this bill will maintain and improve our roads, bridges and transit systems. In turn, this will increase productivity, decrease the amount of time spent on the road and encourage new growth in the economy. For every \$1 billion invested, TEA LU will create and sustain 47,500 new jobs and increase Gross Domestic Product by \$1.75 billion.

###

***The Norman Y. Mineta Research and Special Programs
Improvement Act***

(H.R. 5163)

Became Public Law 108-426

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation reorganizes the current Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA) into two new administrations: The Research and Innovative Technologies Administration (RITA) and the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA).

In RITA, the Administrator will be in charge of the: (1) Department's research and development programs and activities; (2) advancement of innovative technologies, including intelligent transportation systems projects and products; (3) comprehensive transportation statistics research, analysis, and reporting; (4) education and training in transportation and transportation-related fields; and (5) other such duties and powers.

In PHMSA, the Administrator will have authority over the aspects of pipeline and hazardous materials transportation and safety vested in the Secretary.

###

***Public Transportation Terrorism Prevention and Response Act of
2004***

(H.R. 5082)(S. 2884)

Reported by the Committee on October 29th, 2004

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

The purpose of this legislation is to award grants to transit agencies and bus operators to improve security in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission. Under this bill, the Secretary of Transportation, in cooperation with the Secretary of Homeland Security, will be charged with: (1) identifying and evaluating transportation assets that need to be protected, and setting risk-based priorities for defending them; (2) developing a plan, budget, and funding to implement this effort; (3) assigning roles and missions to relevant Federal, State, regional, local and private stakeholders; and (4) providing transportation security assistance based strictly on assessments of risk and vulnerability.

###

Railroads

Emergency Directed Rail Service Act

(H.R. 2712)

Incorporated into the Consolidated Appropriations

Act for FY '04 (H.R. 2763)

Became Public Law 108-199

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation will protect the nation's 1.2 million daily commuter rail passengers by authorizing the Surface Transportation Board (STB) to maintain service and provide interim financial assistance in the event of an Amtrak shutdown. This legislation was prompted by Amtrak's threat in 2002 to shut down its operations unless it received additional federal funding. Such a shutdown would have stranded thousands of non-Amtrak commuter rail riders, and disrupted freight service in large regions of the country. Under existing law, the Surface Transportation Board (STB) would have been powerless to intervene and restore service.

This legislation gives the STB a "safety net" of emergency powers in the event that Amtrak ceases operation. It now has the authority to order the continued maintenance, signaling, and dispatching of the Northeast Corridor. The STB is authorized to use federal funds to pay for these services and to indemnify emergency directed service providers against any increased liability exposure.

###

Rail Infrastructure Development and Expansion Act for the 21st Century (Ride 21)

(H.R. 2571)

Reported from the Committee on Transportation & Infrastructure on
September 18, 2003

And reported from the Committee on Ways and Means on
November 6, 2003

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation would provide \$35 billion in loan financing for freight, passenger, commuter and high-speed railroad infrastructure, and rail intermodal projects. The bill also authorizes \$100 million per year for FY 2004 through 2011 to expand the Swift Rail Development Act (also known as the Swift Act) for locomotives, rolling stock, track, and

signal equipment. There is also \$24 billion in state authority to issue tax-credit and tax-exempt bonds for improvement of high-speed rail corridors.

The Railroad Infrastructure Financing (RRIF) is a federal loan program that provides financing for the construction and rehabilitation of tracks, signals, bridges and other infrastructure. RIDE-21 expands the existing RRIF funding authority from \$3.5 billion to \$35 billion of outstanding loan principal at any time. The amount reserved for regional and shortline railroads would increase from \$1 billion to \$7 billion.

###

Amtrak Reauthorization Act of 2003

(H.R. 2572)

Reported by the Committee on September 17, 2003

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation would authorize \$2 billion per year for each of the fiscal years 2004 through 2006 for Amtrak capital and operating expenses and Amtrak's excess railroad retirement expense.

The Secretary would be required to set aside a reserve to ensure that Amtrak meets all of its contractual obligations related to commuter rail and state-supported rail services. In addition, Amtrak would be required to submit to the Secretary comprehensive business plans and follow-up reports with a separate accounting for its various lines of business, and reports related to capital project expenditures.

###

Rail Passenger Disaster Family Assistance Act of 2003

(H.R. 874)

Passed by the House of Representatives on May 8, 2003

House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation would provide assistance and support services to the families of rail passengers and employees in the event of a train disaster. The legislation applies to accidents involving intercity, interstate rail passenger carriers, and interstate or intrastate high-speed rail carriers. It is modeled after existing aviation disaster legislation and establishes clear lines of communication with victims' families and prevents unscrupulous trial lawyers from taking advantage of grieving family members. To ensure preparedness in the event of a disaster, the legislation mandates that intercity rail passenger carriers submit plans to the NTSB and the Secretary of Transportation showing how they will address the needs of families of passengers involved in an accident.

Under the legislation, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) designates both a director of family support services within the agency, and an independent non-government entity (such as the Red Cross or other organization). The NTSB acts as the point of contact within the government for the families and serves as a liaison between the railroad and the families. Responsibilities of the non-government entity include providing mental health and counseling services to the families, ensuring an environment where the families can grieve in private, and arranging a suitable memorial service in consultation with the families. The bill also prohibits lawyers from making unsolicited communications to families or individuals victims for 45 days after the accident. (This restriction does not apply to contact with employees of the rail passenger carrier.)

###

Water Resources and Environment

A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to reauthorize the National Estuary Program

(H.R. 4731)

Became Public Law 108-399

House bill sponsored by Rep. Jim Gerlach (R-Pennsylvania)

This legislation would reauthorize the National Estuary Program at an annual funding level of \$35 million through fiscal year 2010. Estuaries are coastal water bodies where freshwater from rivers mixes with saltwater from the ocean. Estuaries provide some of the most biologically and economically productive habitat in the nation, but have been adversely impacted by pollution from human activity. In 1987, Congress authorized the National Estuary Program to help restore and protect nationally significant estuaries. It is a non-regulatory, collaborative program that brings together Federal, State, local, and private interests to develop and implement a long-term management plan for an estuary.

###

A bill to amend the Tijuana River Valley Estuary and Beach Sewage Cleanup Act of 2000

(H.R. 4794)

Became Public Law 108-425

House bill sponsored by Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-California)

This legislation authorizes the United States to enter into a contract with a private wastewater treatment plant to reduce the flow of untreated sewage from the Tijuana River in Mexico to the Pacific Ocean off San Diego and other California communities. In previous attempts to solve this health and environmental problem, the United States and Mexico have entered into international agreements and the United States built an International Wastewater Treatment Plant in San Diego. However, that plant does not have sufficient capacity to deal with all the sewage from Mexico and does not meet Clean Water Act standards for treatment, which has prompted a lawsuit by the State of California against the federal government. In 2000, Congress authorized the United States to enter into a fee-for-services contract with the owner of a privately financed secondary treatment facility located in Mexico. The contract is finally being negotiated, but the 2000 authorization must be updated to allow the United States to enter into the contract. H.R. 4794 provides the necessary authority.

###

***A bill to amend the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 to
modify provisions relating to the Board of Directors of the
Tennessee Valley Authority***

(S. 1351)

Passed the House and Senate as Title VI of Division C of the Omnibus
Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2005
Sponsored by Sen. Frist (R-Tennessee)

This legislation amends the Tennessee Valley Authority Act of 1933 to change current three-member governing board of directors to a nine member advisory board and to direct the board to appoint a chief executive officer to carry out the day to day management of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

###

The Water Resources Development Act of 2003

(H.R. 2557)

Passed the House of Representatives on September 24, 2003
House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), Rep. John Duncan (R-Tennessee),
Rep. Jim Oberstar (D-Minnesota), and Rep. Jerry Costello (D-Illinois)

This legislation authorizes the Corps of Engineers to carry out over \$4 billion in projects carried out in partnership with local communities to help prevent the devastating effects of floods and hurricanes, to improve our inland waterways so farmers can move commodities efficiently, to allow our ports and our economy to remain competitive in international trade, and to restore our environment. The Corps of Engineers' civil works program is the nation's largest water resources program. The Corps' responsibilities include navigation, flood control, shoreline protection, hydropower, dam safety, water supply, recreation, environmental restoration and protection, and disaster response and recovery.

###

Wastewater Treatment Works Security Act of 2003

(H.R. 866)

Passed the House of Representatives on May 7, 2003
House bill sponsored by Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska)

This legislation would authorize \$200 million for the Environmental Protection Agency to make grants to States, municipalities, or intermunicipal or interstate agencies to conduct vulnerability assessments and implement security enhancements to reduce vulnerabilities at publicly owned treatment works.

###

Twenty-First Century Water Commission Act of 2003
(H.R. 135)

Passed the House of Representatives on November 21, 2003
House bill sponsored by Rep. John Linder (R-Georgia)

This legislation would establish a nine-member commission to provide for water assessments to project future water supply and demand, review current water management programs at each level of government, and develop recommendations for a comprehensive water strategy to ensure an adequate and dependable water supply to meet America's needs for the next 50 years. In recent years, there have been significant increased demands on water resources, exacerbated by droughts in both the East and the West. As a result, the disputes over water uses have increased.

###

***A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to
extend the authorization of appropriations for the Lake
Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program***
(H.R. 4470)

Passed the House of Representatives on October 6, 2004
House bill sponsored by Rep. David Vitter (R-Louisiana)

This legislation would reauthorize the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program through fiscal year 2010. Since the 1940s, increased population, urbanization, and land use changes have negatively affected the Basin, leading to mounting environmental problems and declining health of the watershed. Under the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Restoration Program EPA may provide up to \$20 million a year in assistance for restoration projects and studies and public education relating to restoring the ecological health of the Basin.

###

Water Quality Investment Act of 2003
(H.R. 784)

Reported by the Committee on September 13, 2004
House bill sponsored by Rep. Dave Camp (R-Michigan)

This legislation would authorize \$250 million a year over six years for the Clean Water Act to provide grants to municipalities and States to help them solve sewer overflows. Combined sewer overflows and sanitary sewer overflows present significant public health

and safety concerns because they can occur in streets, parks, basements and other areas of potential human exposure, and they negatively impact the environment. These discharges of raw sewage are caused by outdated and inadequate infrastructure and are among the major sources responsible for beach closures, shellfish restrictions and exceedances in water quality standards in coastal waters, in the Great Lakes, and in other lakes and rivers.

###

***A bill to amend the Federal Water Pollution Control Act to
reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program***

(H.R. 4688)

Reported by the Committee on September 13, 2004
House bill sponsored by Rep. Wayne Gilchrest (R-Maryland)

This legislation would reauthorize the Chesapeake Bay Program's \$40 million annual funding level through fiscal year 2010. The Chesapeake Bay is the largest estuary in the nation and provides millions of pounds of seafood, an extensive wildlife habitat, a wide variety of recreational opportunities, and is a major hub for shipping and commerce. The Chesapeake Bay Program is a unique regional partnership that directs and conducts the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay under the voluntary Chesapeake Bay Agreement, first adopted in 1983.

###

Water Quality Financing Act of 2003

(H.R. 1560)

Passed the Subcommittee by voice vote on July 17, 2003
House bill sponsored by Rep. John J. Duncan (R-Tennessee)

This legislation would authorize \$20 billion in federal grants over five years for the Clean Water Act State Revolving Loan Funds for increased investment in wastewater infrastructure and reductions in the cost of constructing and maintaining that infrastructure. America's wastewater infrastructure includes 16,000 publicly owned wastewater treatment plants, 100,000 major pumping stations, 600,000 miles of sanitary sewers, and 200,000 miles of storm sewers. Since enactment of the Clean Water Act in 1972, Federal, State, and local investment in our national wastewater infrastructure has been over \$250 billion, providing significant environmental and public health benefits and more than \$300 billion of economic benefits annually. Unfortunately, that infrastructure is now aging and is inadequate to maintain the water quality.

###

OVERSIGHT

Oversight of Department of Homeland Security Legacy Agencies

The federal government underwent a historic reorganization with the creation of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2002. This new Department includes three legacy agencies under the jurisdiction of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee - the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the Coast Guard.

A critical oversight goal of the Committee during the 108th Congress was to ensure that vital, non-homeland security functions in the legacy agencies are preserved while the security issues are addressed. These other vital functions include the Coast Guard's search and rescue operations, drug interdiction and fisheries enforcement, and FEMA's disaster recovery missions.

The Committee has also worked with both the Government Accountability Office and the DHS Inspector General to ensure the efficient integration of those agencies. Since DHS was formed in 2003, the Committee initiated and reviewed reports concerning DHS's merger of disparate IT systems, financial management protocols, contract management policies, and intelligence sharing activities.

###

Oversight of Environmental Protection Agency Grant Activities

One major focus of the Committee's oversight efforts for the 108th Congress was oversight of grants management activities at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). EPA has a decade-long record of poor management in making and overseeing grants, especially discretionary grants. Throughout this time, the EPA Inspector General (IG) and the Government Accountability Office (GAO) have repeatedly documented continued problems. However, the proposed corrective policies have repeatedly been followed by lack of implementation and accountability.

In the 108th Congress, the Transportation Committee worked closely with the EPA IG, the GAO, and the Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee on a bipartisan basis to highlight procedural reforms that seek real change in the process. The result has been a series of new policy guidelines and procedural changes within the agency including a new focus on employee training and accountability, grant competition, grant monitoring, and measurement of environmental benefits.

While these improvements represent a clear step in the right direction, significant work still remains in reforming EPA grants management. Testimony during Congressional hearings indicates that resistance remains from within the EPA culture to these reforms. The Committee will continue to conduct oversight hearings to ensure that the new procedures are implemented and that EPA awards grants based on identified environmental benefits.

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